



Research and Reference Service

OVERSEAS REACTION TO THE CUBAN SITUATION
(As of 8 a.m., November 23, 1962)

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This is a research report, not a statement of Agency policy

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SUMMARY

The virtual absence of reported world comment on Cuba today indicates the crisis is no longer regarded as a major concern in world affairs.

The Soviet Union is giving considerably less attention to Cuba and playing the peaceful coexistence line. Russia claims peace is a gift from Moscow because of "mutual concession" and "sensible compromise."

Moderate Cuban propaganda coverage is focusing attention on suspension of the blockade and cancelling of military alerts in the U.S. and Soviet Union.

West European editors, usually quick to comment at length on world development, seem to have turned their attention largely to the Sino-Indian situation or other matters. Some additional comment may be forthcoming, but available observations on the press conference are not extensive.

There is a similar shortage of reported current comment on Cuba from other parts of the world.

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SOVIET UNION

The spirit of Thanksgiving seemed to echo through such attention as Moscow gives Cuban affairs today. Propagandists insist that peace is a gift of Moscow: "mutual concession," "sensible compromise", but, above all, Soviet espousal of "peaceful coexistence." These have averted war and now have opened new vistas for future relations between the "two camps."

There was no substantive discussion of real issues in the relatively light propaganda output which Moscow devoted to Cuba. Available material shows a switch from yesterday's theme on the need for American emulation of Moscow's "positive" moves to paeans to "peaceful coexistence."

One of the Moscow broadcasts which drew lessons from Cuban events contained an unusual line. Soviet media do not acknowledge Communism's contributory role to world problems. But one commentator, after claiming that Soviet action in Cuba brought about a vastly improved world situation, admitted that it still "is not possible to avoid disputes between nations belonging to the different camps." The reason for this constitutes an implicit acknowledgement that communism will continue to try to extend its influence world-wide. Under present conditions, said the Moscow broadcast, when a "whole series of young nations is being set up which have not yet chosen their road to development, it is not possible to avoid disputes between nations belonging to the different camps."

Moscow sees no other alternative: either 'peaceful coexistence' or thermonuclear war. It asserts that the U.S. now has also discovered this. Therefore this knowledge, available to both sides in the dispute, should lead to the negotiated settlement of such other problems as a nuclear test ban, disarmament, a nonaggression pact between the two military blocs, etc.

Soviet audiences were informed yesterday that the Defense Department has lifted the special battle readiness of SAC, imposed at the start of the Cuban crisis.

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CUBA

Moderate coverage of the latest developments is focusing on the U.S. suspension of the blockade and cancellation of military alerts by the U.S. and the Soviet Bloc.

Although the media are implying an easing of the crisis tension, Kuchilan, Havana CMQ Television commentator, announced "an awakening of the masses" in Latin America. He continued: "The masses have faith that if the Cuban people...have been able to achieve and maintain their revolution, a process of collective progress and improvement can also be secured in the rest of the countries."

Thus Cuba is continuing to claim for itself the role of revolutionary leadership in the Hemisphere, and to play on the feelings of the masses in the area.

NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

Turning to more pressing domestic issues, the Near East and South Asia has written a qualified "finis" to the Cuban incident. Commentators in India and Iran thought Castro might attempt to stir things up again by shooting down a U.S. reconnaissance plane. But he would be on his own since he has lost Soviet backing.

FAR EAST

Reported area comment was limited to a statement by a spokesman of the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of China (Taiwan), who said that the current situation in Cuba proves "that the only language the Communists can understand is strength". He went on to counsel continued vigilance for the free world in order that "Cuba will not be used as a base to export communism".

CHINA

The domestic press reported that the China Peace Committee sent a cable to its Cuban counterpart reaffirming "the complete support of the Chinese people for the just demands and struggle of the Cuban people".

A Havana-based ICNA correspondent reported a Cuban armed forces communique calling upon the Cuban Army to "increase military preparations and to continue to maintain high vigilance in the face of U.S. aggressors."

Peking has yet to comment editorially on the President's press conference or the Soviet agreement to withdraw the bombers.